REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the following remarks.

Claims 11 and 12 have been added as supported by the specification at page 6, lines 29-32.

Claims 1-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okamura et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,523,154) in view of Girgis (U.S. Patent No. 4,476,191). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

This rejection relies on Girgis' disclosure of inclusion of a phenol resin and a water-soluble condensation product, which is a novolac-type condensation product, in the composition. Girgis discloses use of phenol as a phenolic compound, which reacts with aldehyde (see coln. 6, lines 3-12). Girgis, however, fails to teach or suggest inclusion of a phenol resin as a component of a composition in addition to the water-soluble condensation product of resorcinol-formaldehyde as claim 1 recites.

In addition, Girgis discloses a phenolic aldehyde resin obtained through a two-step reaction, which includes a reaction of a phenolic compound and aldehyde in an acidic medium to produce a phenolic aldehyde resinous mixture as the first step and a resinous reaction in neutral to basic pH with a basic catalyst as the second step (see coln. 4, lines 45-52 and coln. 7, lines 17-28). Girgis discloses that a resin material obtained in an acid medium in the first step includes almost no cross-linking (see coln. 4, lines 59-66). Girgis further discloses that the resin obtained in an acid medium in the first step continues aging in the second step to produce a lightly cross-linked phenolic resin (see coln. 5, lines 23-31) and that the cross-linking added to the resinous mixture in the second step provides toughness to the resin (coln. 5, lines 41-60). The resin of Girgis obtained by the two-step method is different from the resin obtained in the acidic medium in the first step. Moreover, in contrast to the resin obtained in the first step of Girgis, which needs the second step to obtain the toughness, the novolac-type water-soluble condensation product of claim 1 can form a dense film and provide the composition with

high environment resistance (see page 6, lines 29-21 of the specification). Thus, Girgis fails to disclose the novolac-type water-soluble condensation product as claim 1 recites. Further, the resinous mixture of Girgis obtained in the first step is an intermediate material, and there is no reasonable basis to combine the intermediate material of Girgis with Okamura. Accordingly, Girgis does not remedy the deficiencies of Okamura.

Like claim 1, claim 4 recites the composition that includes a phenol resin and a water-soluble condensation product of resorcinol-formaldehyde, which is a novolac-type condensation product. Thus, for at least the same reasons as discussed for claim 1, claim 4 is distinguished from Okamura in view of Girgis.

Added claims 11 and 12 recite that the water-soluble condensation product of resorcinol-formaldehyde is highly polymerized. In Girgis, the phenolic aldehyde resin contains trimer and dimer polymers, and the resin includes no oligomers higher than trimer (see coln. 3, lines 37-46). By including the water-soluble condensation product, which is highly polymerized, the composition recited in claims 11 and 12 can be dense and provide high environment resistance to a coating layer of the composition and the reinforced cord using the composition, respectively (see page 6, lines 29-32 of the specification). Thus, claims 11 and 12 further support the differences between the compositions of these claims and the composition of Girgis.

Accordingly, claim 1 and claims 2-3, which ultimately depend from claim 1, and claim 4 and claims 5-10, which ultimately depend from claim 4, are distinguished from Okamura in view of Girgis, and this rejection should be withdrawn.

Application No. 10/590926
Responsive to the office action dated August 4, 2009

In view of the above, Applicants request reconsideration of the application in the form of a Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

HAMRE, SCHUMANN, MUELLER & LARSON, P.C.
P.O. Box 2902
Minneapolis, MN 55402-0902
(612) 455-3800

Dated: February 4, 2010

By: _____
Douglas P. Mueller
Reg. No. 30,300

DPM/my/jls